



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO – Volcano**

Fact Sheet #9, Fiscal Year (FY) 2002

January 27, 2002

*The last Fact Sheet was dated January 26. New information is underlined.*

**Numbers Affected**

Total Affected: 350,000 (U.N.)  
Deaths: Approximately 147 (U.N. and USAID/OFDA field reports)  
Displaced People: Approximately 30,000 (USAID/OFDA field reports)  
Homes destroyed: 12,500 households (60,000 to 80,000 people) (USAID/OFDA field reports)

**Current Situation**

- There are unconfirmed reports of new fissures opening or existing fissures expanding in areas north of Goma, according to USAID/OFDA field reports. A seismologist from Japan has arrived to assist the team of volcanologists at Goma in identifying the cause of continuing geologic activity, and to assess possible risks to populations in the area. As a precaution, the U.N. Security Coordinator's office has required that only four U.N. personnel may live in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The rest are staying in Gisenyi, Rwanda.
- A survey by relief agencies determined that there were approximately 229,000 people in Goma on January 23. The city population is increasing as displaced people return to Goma.
- Most aid agencies agree that approximately 12,500 households, between 60,000 and 80,000 people, lost their homes as a result of the volcano.
- USAID/OFDA field staff report that there are approximately 30,000 displaced people in the following areas: in Sake, DRC (5,000); in Rutshuru, DRC (5,000); in displacement camps near Gisenyi and Ruhengeri, Rwanda (5,000); in Bukavu, DRC (15,000). Changes in the estimated number of people displaced are attributable to movements back into Goma, improving assessments, and integration of displaced people into communities of relatives and acquaintances.
- The World Food Program (WFP) expects to complete a general distribution of one-week rations to the entire population in Goma by January 28. WFP and the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) are discussing plans for future food distributions with local authorities and relief agencies. The discussions are addressing the number of people that the distributions should target and how long the distributions should continue.
- UNICEF has been coordinating the distribution of non-food items in Goma and Sake, DRC. There is currently a general distribution of goods to all residents, comprised of blankets, soap, water jugs and plastic sheets for shelter. Subsequent distributions will target households whose homes were destroyed in the volcano.
- Each day there are several incidents of unruly crowds at the eleven food and non-food item distribution points in Goma and Sake. Implementing agencies are working with local authorities to better manage the crowds.
- There has been one confirmed case of cholera in Goma. Tests are being conducted to determine the strain of the disease. Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) has established a cholera referral program, and adequate medical supplies are in place to contain a health outbreak.
- Some relief shipments crossing into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are being delayed by border guards, and some levies are being imposed on humanitarian traffic.

**U.S. Government Response**

- USAID/OFDA has made \$3 million available for relief assistance in response to the Goma volcano. Funds may be applied toward monetary grants to relief agencies, additional commodities shipments, or local purchase of relief items as needs require.
- USAID/OFDA is providing seismographic equipment to the Goma Volcanic Observatory that will allow seismologists in the area to better understand the continuing low-level earthquakes being experienced in the affected area. The equipment includes three seismometers and three seismographs, obtained by USAID/OFDA through an agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey. The equipment will arrive at Kigali, Rwanda on February 1.
- USAID/OFDA has provided two airlifts of relief commodities containing a total of 40,000 wool blankets, 35,000 water jugs, 20 10-000 liter water bladders, 300 rolls of plastic sheeting for shelter, and 5,000 dust masks.

- USAID Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) has approved the loan of 1,714 metric tons (MT) of Title II emergency food aid, valued at \$1.1 million, from existing programs in the region.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved the loan of 3,450 MT of 416(b) emergency food commodities, valued at \$2.3 million, from existing programs in the region.
- The USAID assistance team consists of six people in Kigali, Goma and Bukavu, DRC, including a health specialist, a water/sanitation engineer, a food security specialist, and three field operations officers.
- USAID/OFDA has provided \$50,000 to the U.S. Embassies in Kinshasa and Kigali for Goma relief assistance.

#### **Relief Efforts**

- Fourteen donors, not including the U.S. Government, have pledged over \$22.5 million of assistance for the Goma volcano disaster.
- Both the Government of DRC and the Government of Rwanda have been providing material assistance and coordination support for the relief effort.

#### **Background**

- Mt. Nyiragongo erupted at approximately 9:30 AM local time (2:30 AM EST) on January 17. The volcano produced three paths of lava, one of which headed toward the city of Goma, 18 kilometers to the south. A fourth fissure opened at 4:00 PM on January 17. The area had been experiencing tremors intermittently since March 2001. The most recent eruption of Mt. Nyiragongo was in 1977, when the lava flow covered 20 square kilometers, killed 2,000 people, and destroyed 400 houses and a 10-kilometre section of road.
- On January 18, U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda Margaret K. McMillion and U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Aubrey Hooks declared disasters for the eruption of Mt. Nyiragongo near Goma in the DRC.

#### **U.S. Government Assistance Funding Summary**

##### ***USAID/OFDA***

- Monetary support to implementation partners providing assistance to volcano-affected populations in DRC and Rwanda..... \$50,000
- A January 21 airlift of USAID/OFDA relief commodities, including blankets, water jugs, water bladders, and dust masks. The cost includes the value of the commodities and the cost of transportation .....\$494,000
- A January 23 airlift of USAID/OFDA airlift departed the USAID/OFDA warehouse in Italy. The second airlift contains blankets, water jugs, and plastic sheeting. The cost includes the value of the commodities and the cost of transportation. ....\$339,337
- Seismographic equipment for the Goma Volcano Observatory, to arrive in Kigali on January 30. The cost includes the value of the commodities and the cost of transportation. ....\$39,750

##### ***USAID/FFP***

- USAID/FFP has approved the loan of 1,714 MT of Title II emergency food aid from ongoing programs in the region. The cost includes the value of transportation and other associated expenses..... \$1,100,000

##### ***USDA***

- USDA has approved the loan of 3,450 MT of 416(b) emergency food commodities from ongoing programs in the region. The cost includes the value of transportation and other associated expenses .....\$2,255,000

USAID/OFDA .....\$923,087  
 USAID/FFP .....\$1,100,000  
 USDA .....\$2,255,000  
**Total USG Assistance .....\$4,278,087**

*USAID/OFDA fact sheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at [http://www.usaid.gov/hum\\_response/ofda/situation.html](http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html)*